

Thriving Communities

Implementing the Foundation Phase

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Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Details of Changes
V 1	16 12 2024	Thriving Communities Partnership Manager	Original draft

1. Purpose

This report provides the implementation process for the foundation phase of the Dorset Thriving Communities Network (DTCN). It follows a significant research and engagement phase; and subsequent approval at the Dorset Health and Wellbeing Board (DHWB) of 4 recommendations contained within the Thriving Communities Report and specifically recommendation 3.

Recommendation 3:

“.....the board to recommend the development of a project delivery and transition plan for Option 3: developing a VCS led Thriving Community Network model as supported by the Thriving Communities Reference Group.”

2. Funding

In 2023 Public Health Dorset agreed through the DHWB to use 2021/22 underspend to support place-based partnership working in each council area. This proposal sees the Dorset Council share which amounts to £309k invested in growing the VCS infrastructure to support this way of working. Although the [Thriving Communities Report](#) recommended long-term investment, this initial foundation phase will provide a 2 year ‘proof of concept’ model on which evaluation will be conducted and will be delivered within the original £309,000 funding.

3. Approach

Thriving Communities will be developed in partnership with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), including the Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly (VCSA), to support a joined-up model of locality working, prioritising delivery through prevention and partnership. The DTCNs will work with older people whilst also supporting the creation of all-age friendly environments.

Throughout the Thriving Communities project the “Dorset Council and the Voluntary Community Sector: Principles for Working Together” have been followed. As a result, the information obtained in the research and engagement phase has been rich and reflects the voices of older people in Dorset and those who support them in the VCS. It is therefore proposed that the principles continue to guide the implementation phase, whilst work with the VCSA will underpin the partnership approach.

Any implementation will also take account of current programmes of work across the Integrated Care Network (ICN) and will support the development of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INT) through, where possible, aligned place-based development.

The Thriving Communities foundation stage will be developed with town and parish councils, the VCS, our communities and ICS partners.

A lead VCS organisation or partnership will be identified through a transparent award process. Through local engagement and alignment to other ICS programmes 2 or 3 key geographic areas will be identified with the VCS in which the foundation DTCNs will be created. The Thriving Communities Partnership Manager will work with that organisation or partnership through to the foundation DTCNs being established.

The Thriving Communities foundation phase will be designed to provide the base for further development of the network model, facilitating strong, supportive communities and enhanced wellbeing.

4. Project Implementation Timeline

Activity and Actions	Delivery Date
Phase 1 – Project Completion	
Project Delivery and Transition Report	September 2024 (complete)
Foundation Phase Report	December 2025
Contract award process	March 2025
Recommendation to award	April 2025
Phase 2 – Transition	
Creation of DTCN VCS Network coordination function	May 2025
Network community events and communication launch	June 2025
Phase 3 – Network Development	
Initial DTCN established	August 2025
First evaluation	August 2026

5. Thriving Communities Budget:

The table below indicates the spend to date and what is proposed in implementation:

	Project Phase	Date range	Purpose	Allocation	Progress
Aim: Project development to transition into delivery.	Phase 1 - Initiation	Oct - December 23	Project Management	9,000	On track
	Phase 2 - Engagement	Jan - April 24	Project Management	12,000	On track
			Engagement	12,000	On track
	Phase 3	April - June 24	Project Management	6,000	On track
	Phase 4	July - August 24	Project Management	6,000	On track
Total				45,000	
Aim: To implement Dorset Thriving Community Network with 16 Hubs/Groups	Implementation	2025 - 2026	VCS Infrastructure Level 1 (VCSA) including communication, launch and evaluation	10,000	
			VCS Infrastructure Level 2 (coordination, networking and leadership)	80,000	
			VCS Infrastructure Level 3 (grants and local delivery)	132,000	
			Other project and monitoring costs	42,000	
Total				264,000	309,000

Funding through to the end of the implementation stage is taken from the original £309,000 underspend and will result in the provision of a DTCN co-ordinator function within the VCS to create,

lead and coordinate the DTCN. It will also facilitate the creation of the network with up to 15 participating groups and charities for 24 months. The funds will also provide support to the Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly (VCSA) to assist in the creation of the model for delivery of the DTCN, communication, marketing and evaluation. As well as their involvement in steering the creation and implementation of the network.

The implementation layers:

a) VCS Infrastructure level 1 (The VCSA)

The Thriving Communities Partnership Manager will work closely with the VCSA throughout the development of the DTCNs.

The VCSA will be provided funds to assist in the creation of the model for delivery of the DTCN, communication, marketing and evaluation. Following evaluation, the network model may be considered in other areas of health and social care preventative work by the VCS.

b) VCS Infrastructure level 2 (Organisations which support the development of other VCS groups).

Through a transparent award process a group or partnership will be identified to provide the coordinating function for the DTCN. The role will manage all grants and will monitor performance.

The coordinating function will work with the Thriving Communities Partnership Manager to develop the foundation DTCNs and will then coordinate development activity including workshops and the sharing of best practice.

The coordinating function will provide a single point of contact into and from the networks.

c) VCS infrastructure level 3 (The infrastructure of local groups working directly with older people)

Approximately 15 grants would be awarded to the total value of £134,000 to support and grow established groups and charities for 24 months as founding members of the network.

The grants will be awarded based on set criteria which will be developed with the VCS; however, awards of grants will be steered by the Dorset Council Grants Protocol and will have agreed

monitoring criteria and schedules. These grants will specifically enable delivery of service and support which enables older people to live longer healthier lives and to create age friendly environments.

The specification will provide clarity around how the VCS funding provider passes grants onto others and how the grants will be spent and accounted for. The specification will be clear on how to monitor and record what is spent.

The Thriving Communities approach to recording and monitoring will be to simplify processes where it is possible to do so.

5.1 Route to Market

The Thriving Communities team will continue to work with the Dorset Council Commercial and Procurement team to determine the most appropriate/cost effective/best value route. It is anticipated that Dorset Council Contract Procedure Rules could facilitate a direct award to the VCSA.

6. Roles

6.1 Summary Role of Dorset Council monitor (initially Thriving Communities Partnership Manager)

Work alongside DTCN coordinator to create foundation networks

Review contract against agreed criteria

Review progress reporting

Review impact on Dorset Council and ICS priorities

Review and publish evaluation reports

Act as SPOC into any funding partnership

Report to Thriving Communities Reference Group

6.2 Summary role of the VCS lead organisation/partnership

Create a role of DTCN coordinator

Create a partnership launch and communication plan

Work with Thriving Communities Partnership Manager to identify areas and groups to form the foundation DTCNs

Develop and grow a foundation network of groups and organisations which is inclusive and diverse

Ensure standards, reporting and development plans are adhered to

Facilitate networking and development events

Provide direct support to network members

Provide a single point of entry to and with the network

Provide grant funding to network members and monitor compliance

Provide a conduit for communication between the network and partnership

Work closely with the VCSA

Coordinate and produce project performance information for management, monitoring and reporting purposes.

Ensure opportunities for intergenerational activities are integrated throughout the network

6.3 Summary Role of Thriving Community Network Members

Active participation in the network

Providing support and service to older people which deliver on preventative ICS health and care systems priorities which may include:

- Reducing health inequalities
- Preventing hospital admissions
- Enabling prompt discharge
- Delivering anticipatory care assessments and implementing personalised support interventions so people can stay at home in their communities
- Improving physical and mental health and wellbeing

Provide an agreed level of support based on a tiered model

Provide standard, simple monthly performance and cost reports

Work on an action plan for development

Agree to participate in networking and development events

Agree to register for and to receive infrastructure support

7. Resource Requirements:

Thriving Communities Project Management and monitoring

Communications and Engagement Support

Business administration Support

Procurement support

Finance support

Legal service support

8. Proposed Next Phase – December 2024 – End March 2025 – Summary:

Detailed engagement with VCS:

- VCSA
- Infrastructure Organisations
- Charities
- Communities Groups

Maintain information provision and reporting to the Thriving Communities Reference Group

Work directly with the Dorset Council Communities and Partnership Team

Engage with and inform key Dorset Council Directorates and programmes

Engage with and inform key NHS Dorset teams and programmes

Develop and deliver transparent contract award process